

*The following excerpts are from the statement "Guns and Artillery Must Remain Silent In Southeast Asia" by Marty Natalegawa, foreign minister of Indonesia, chair of ASEAN, at the United Nations Security Council, 14 February 2011, as published in the Jakarta Post on 16 February:*

There's little doubt about the complexity of the border issue confronting Thailand and Cambodia. However, there is absolutely no reason why the issue cannot be resolved through peaceful means; through dialogue and negotiations.

Each side professes its defensive and peaceful intent; apportioning to the other responsibility for provoking the border incidents. However, intent must be accurately deciphered. Confidence and trust built on the ground.

There is, thus, a need to build a more reliable local and higher level communications system between the two sides, perhaps with third party support, to ensure that the cease-fire holds, to foster confidence in each others' commitment to hold the cease-fire and to remove self-fulfilling worst scenario action and counter reaction. Not least, there is an obvious need for the two sides to make a higher level political commitment to respect the cease-fire.

The Security Council may wish to join in calling on the two sides to respect and to adhere to the cease-fire and to support ASEAN's endeavor in this regard. Commitment to address the issue by peaceful means and commitment to respect the cease-fire; these are essential if we are to create conditions conducive for diplomatic negotiations to take place.

Based on the communications I have had, Indonesia foresees three basic and mutually reinforcing objectives:

First, an ASEAN call and, indeed, strong encouragement, to the parties concerned to continue to commit to the peaceful settlement of disputes and renunciation

of the use and threat of the use of force, as provided for in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation and its Charter;

Second, an ASEAN support to the efforts by the two parties to ensure respect of the cease-fire.

Third, an ASEAN effort to ensure conducive climate for the resumption of negotiations between the two sides. ASEAN may facilitate such talks and be informed by the parties concerned on the general outline of its progress.

Our region is only too painfully aware of the costs of conflict. It is, at the same, cognizant of the dividends accruing from conditions of amity and cooperation. Common security means common prosperity and common progress. We are not about to let these gains lapse.

ASEAN has been at the forefront in catapulting the region to an ASEAN Community by 2015 in all its three pillars, namely economic, sociocultural and political-security. In such a Community, resort to the use of force to settle disputes cannot be the norm. It is an exceptional and unique aberration; as we believe the current situation between Cambodia and Thailand.

In short, ASEAN has every incentive to ensure that the present difficulties afflicting two of its members be resolved amicably. Guns and artillery must remain silent in Southeast Asia.

Thus, we ask for synergy of efforts by the Security Council to support ASEAN's endeavors and ultimately, to support and provide every positive incentive for the two parties concerned, Cambodia and Thailand, to resolve their differences amicably, as befitting members of the ASEAN family of nations; and indeed, members of the global community of nations.

As chair of ASEAN, Indonesia is of the view that there is nothing inevitable about a military solution to the two countries' border issue.